Audio File VN520368 Excerpted Minutes: 00:03:12 to 00:59:24

Transcript of Proceedings

Audio Transcription



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1 (Beginning of excerpt.)

MALE SPEAKER: I think we'll get right into water treatment and recovery questions. So does anyone have any questions that they'd like to ask into this microphone -- or, actually, I guess we have a few. Do you -- you want to start with those?

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah. Okay. I thought we'd start with some of the questions that we got this morning that we didn't have a chance to answer.

So, one, "If a CAFO is permitted for 3,500 animal units currently operates to 2,500, what is considered the number in the evaluation?"

The answer to that is the -- the 2,500, what they're actually operating at. So you may want to consider expanding or -- or -- or sizing your system to accommodate the 3,500, but we'd be -- we'd actually be interested in what actually -- is actually operating.

Next two questions actually, although they
don't seem to be related, are and I thought this might
be rhetorical, but I'll try to answer it. It is,

"Have you thought about the contracting complexities
and liabilities in administering nutrients to land
from the hub-and-spoke farms?"

And the answer to that is yes. But again,

that -- the -- the answer to that also highly -- is highly dependent on the actual proposal. Essentially, if you're talking about liabilities, you're talking about I guess who is in possession and ownership of the -- of the manure.

I mean, I think if you're talking about -liability might be considered a manure spill, so if
the manure spill happens at the digester, who -- who
is owning and operating that? That would be where the
liability would normally be. If it occurs -- say if
you have a pipeline and it occurs in the pipe, who
owns that, who's in possession of that and -- and owns
that pipeline? And if you -- if it happens while the,
you know, it's being trucked, if, you know, as we, you
know, who's -- who's trucking it?

So, and on the tree, you can't find it, but it is (inaudible). It's above this very question and that's the answer I got. And it's gonna depend on who is -- where it happens and how it happens, if somebody was negligent or not, and then who's actually owner -- owning it.

So, I'm gonna talk about a little bit about the kind of another question that came up regarding -- and -- and maybe explaining how we operate the Dane County Digester, how that's constructed, we'll help

answer it.

The way we handle this is that -- I believe I talked to Tim -- we have two CAFO -- at least in one of the regional digesters, we have two CAFO's and a non-CAFO that's involved in that. And so when the -- you know, they both (inaudible) their manure into the system. When they take it back, of course the CAFO's are responsible to spread their manure according to their permit, which has a nutrient management plan as part of that.

The non-CAFO essentially has a contractual arrangement with the digester. And the digester permit, when they have a permit, has a nutrient management plan requirement in that.

And so the -- the arrangement is that the non-CAFO farm is contracting (inaudible) -- kind of like a contract manure (inaudible) and agrees to apply the manure that they get back from the digester according to the nutrient management plan that is in the digester's permit. And so, what that does is that does not subject that small farm to any regulation necessarily or -- or a permit. So -- but they have this contractual agreement.

And so -- and -- and any sort of violation or -- or issue with that would be handled under

contract law as opposed to under the -- under permit and -- and we would -- we, DNR, would be holding the digester owner responsible for the proper -- and regulating the digester as opposed to the small farm.

So -- so that's -- that's the arrangement that we have there and -- and -- and what we want because, as I would anticipate, one of the concerns that a small farm would have is am I now gonna have to get a permit, am I gonna be regulated if I engage in this opportunity. And this is a way to keep them at arm's length from the regulation.

So, the -- and had sort of another sort of rhetorical question about farmer participation. "Why do it, will it be regulated?"

I think I just answered that. And -- or to the one in return. I think that this kind of, sort of molds into the economic discussion. And one thing that we would hope is that this could be done in a more efficient manner, as far as manure management and some of the numbers that Sarah was putting up.

If it's costing you 1 cent and a half or 2 cents a gallon to -- to dispose of your manure now, if you could do that for 1 cent a gallon instead, by participating in this project, that -- that would be an incentive as a farmer to -- to do that. And if you

had, sa
have sa
units,
manure
and hav
might h

had, say, just a back-of-a-napkin calculated -- you have say -- say a fairly large firm, say 1,000 animal units, you might be spending \$150,000 to manage your manure and if you could do that for 100,000 instead and have 50,000 transferred to your bottom line, that might be an attractive incentive for you to consider participation.

So -- so that's -- that would be one reason why they would do it. You know, the number of reasons that a farmer might do it probably as varied as the number of farmers. So, some might do it for more altruistic reasons, but I would hope that there would be an economic incentive would be part of this more efficient way to do -- to do that.

Just to add one -- one more.

When we talked about the Majestic Meadows

Dairy that has this, a system which has a digester and

manure treatment, they actually divert about 70

percent of the water into the -- into a clean water -
you know, that comes out that they get back to the

cows, they recycle, so they've reduced their manure

volume by 70 percent, so you only go 30 percent of the

volume, so you got much less volume.

The way it's set up, they -- I don't think they have it set up this way, but they could very well

-- you take out the phosphorus with one part of their process. That could be shooted off into one storage area. Take out the nitrogen with two other parts of their process. That could be shooted off into another part. And so you would have, you know, one pool of more phosphorus-dominated manure, if you will, and another pool of more nitrogen-dominated manure, which would give the (inaudible) to do that, but to use sort of (inaudible) to build more customized to your crop needs as far as the fertilizer amendment.

So -- and plus you have only 30 percent of the volume that you did under the traditional treatment. So, those would be maybe some other reasons that would be attractive.

I'll take one that I can't answer very well and we'll have to post this on the website and I'll get a better answer and that has to do -- as I mentioned, I have (inaudible) history in water programs. This is a -- has to do with air. And so I know enough to be dangerous, but I don't want to stand up here and try to answer this.

It says, (inaudible), "Please speak to the current air permitting requirements for anaerobic digesters on CAFO's."

One thing I do know is that there are air

permits involved and -- for example, in the Dane

County one, I know that they do have some trouble

meeting their hydrogen sulfide emissions and -- and -
but that's about the extent of my knowledge. There's

probably people that operate digesters in the room

that have vast -- you know, could answer this question

much better than I can and so I'd welcome you to -- to

do that, if we -- if we have -- is there anyone that --

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah.

MALE SPEAKER: 'Cause I will admit, I'm not -- this is not my area.

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, the main issues for air permit requirements are, really, comes down to what you are gonna do with that gas. On the electrical generation side, you do have to be concerned about the H2S limits. There's stack testing. The air permit process is actually fairly straightforward, not extremely complicated.

If you are looking at -- on the gas cleanup side, it's a little bit different because you're not burning all that gas. The main issue there is really the flare. Again, in general, you're not a huge source of air emissions, so the process, in my experience with the Wisconsin DNR, is -- is very

smooth and -- and straightforward.

MALE SPEAKER: And we did not pay him to say that. Okay. Okay.

One other one before I get to the grants is,

"What are the considerations for those looking to

partner with a local municipal wastewater treatment

facility in regards to the DNR-imposed phosphorus

limits? Are adaptive management proposals looked upon

favorably?"

So, essentially, to be honest, we're not gonna give a municipality a break on their phosphorus limits. The phosphorus limits are what they are.

They're based on their -- their receiving water, what the receiving water can assimilate from a water quality standpoint.

So, some of the municipalities are meeting their phosphorus limits by mechanical means, doing it in their treatment plant. Theirs are using treating.

Others are using adaptive management.

And so, if they have the capacity, they may be -- you know, there may be some reasons that they would be willing to enter into a agreement to accept all or some of the waste and treat it, from a revenue stream 'cause they're not gonna do it for free, so that's something that your proposal would have to look

at, as far as what is the cost.

If you have a municipality that's available to take your -- to take your -- your waste stream, what would it cost you to do it that way as opposed to building your own treatment system and amortizing that over so many years and you'd have to look at that.

Adaptive management might be -- as far as our evaluation, there's no really bonus points in -- in -- as part of that, but it may be of assistance to you in dealing -- in -- in negotiating with a municipality because, you know, if you have a group of farmers that might be willing to engage in best management practices, that would reduce phosphorus coming off of their land that the municipality could use in an adaptive management approach.

That gives you some bargaining power, I guess I would call it, to talk to the municipality about it 'cause we could -- in return for accepting our waste, we'll do these adaptive management things and it might save them money. It might be a win/win situation for you. So -- so I would encourage, you know, some consideration along those lines. Okay.

There was a question about the grants.

And rather than me talk and then Steve goes, oh, no, tell me I told you the wrong thing later, on

the way home, I thought I'd have Steve come up and so
we'll put the funding opportunities slide back up and
he can -- we'll give a short little talk about the
grants and -- and fill -- fill in a lot of the blanks
that I'm sure I left. Thank you.

MALE SPEAKER: Thanks. Obviously -- I suspect many of you have seen or are aware of these grants. Save you the suspense, none of 'em are a perfect fit.

The reason I wanted to make sure you were aware of 'em though, is that some of these might have some things in there that you can take advantage of, but I didn't want people to go through a lot of the hard work here, that folks will do, only to trip over one of these after the fact and say, well, heck, why didn't I know about this thing, it might've been a good fit. So, let me just talk a little bit more about 'em.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative obviously has -- has been a tremendous amount of money into all of the Great Lakes area. It's -- along with the common theme actually for all of 'em, nutrients is going to be the -- the hook, if you will. That's going to be the thing that will give an opportunity to possibly compete for these is how are -- how would

1 these
2 net
3 this
4 these

these projects reduce nutrients, how would there be a net export, if you will, or reduction net area, so this is about making sure you are at least aware of these so that you can evaluate what options there might be.

The other thing that would be a challenge is the timeline. So, for May 1st, perhaps none of these will work or none of these will work easily. But the May 1st is one of your deadlines. If -- if there's a project that gets some legs, obviously there's going to be a lot more effort going forward to bring that thing to fruition and some of these might fit in very well at that point.

The Fund for Lake Michigan and the Great

Lakes Protection Fund are two of 'em that I'd kind of

like you to keep a -- a little bit sharper focus on

because they are not federal funded, so they're not

ones that are in the current evolving situation. I'll

just leave it at that. So -- 'cause we don't know

where we're going to end up with some of the federal
funded ones.

I'm hopeful that they'll -- they'll continue and have legs, but the Fund for Lakes Michigan, Great Lakes Protection Fund are also a little bit more fluid -- no pun intended -- on their funding opportunity

windows. So, you get a good project idea, I'd suggest to shop those, go take a look at what they have online and think about reaching out to the coordinators for those.

The Protection Fund in particular has a interest and novel ideas, or innovative ideas, things that then could be shown to work in your area and then be transferrable across the whole region. That might be a good fit. What was the --

MALE SPEAKER: The money amounts?

MALE SPEAKER: Yes, the money amounts, highly variable across all of these and they change.

The Protection Fund is one that can have some pretty high dollar amounts. It does change, so I don't know what it currently is, sir, but I think it's 6 -- 6 figures up to a million for the Protection Fund.

Most of 'em are going to be 5 -- 5 to 6 figure kind of a range. The GLRI we have on occasion funded multi-million dollar projects but those, quite frankly, are usually contaminated sediment cleanups, but it can be on the higher end, as well.

So, more than anything, I just wanted you to be cognizant of these so that when you're going through your project proposal, at least take a look at

these and -- and evaluate whether they'll -- they'll be a fit or not.

I am sure I haven't answered all the questions. Are -- can I open it up? Are there any specific questions people have about these?

MALE SPEAKER: These -- these funds would be available regardless if you were part of the digester or, uh --

MALE SPEAKER: Right.

The question is, are these funds -- would these funds be available whether you're part of this program effort or not.

The answer is yes. These are -- they're completely independent of this effort. It's more that I saw this effort as being some opportunities that might exist in these and I wanted you to be aware of 'em so that people didn't find out after the fact.

There's a question all the way in the back.

MALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible) Shultz and I guess my question specifically to this is -- I -- I assisted -- I was the Focus on Energy representative that oversaw most of the digester installs and the millions of dollars that went into these systems.

We're really good at paying upfront into these systems.

2.2

My question to you is, how can we change this and instead of paying for the system, look at how we pay for the outputs of the system? Because a fair proportion of those systems I worked with are no longer operating and I don't see this as a sustainable means of trying to build this industry and build this -- this network.

So my question is, are these funding agencies, if you are here today, willing to look at an alternative way of funding these systems, funding this anaerobic digestion and manure management component and -- and looking at it from a back-end approach, buying the electricity, paying into the electricity purchase, paying into the nutrient management side?

'Cause that's really what's gonna make these systems work in the end. We can throw all the money we want at 'em, but if they don't pay for themselves at the end of the day, they get taken off line.

MALE SPEAKER: Thanks. So your question is more about sustainability, if you will, and how it fits as a -- as an appropriate business model, which is different than these, so may I hand this one off?

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, absolutely.

MALE SPEAKER: Okay.

MALE SPEAKER: Thanks. We -- we might call

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you back up if there's other questions about the -these funding sources.

So, the -- the decision that came down from the Commission as to how to allocate these dollars has been -- has come through. And so, the -- the -- this is the project, this is the program and how it's going to be in this iteration.

It doesn't -- it doesn't guarantee success by any means. It -- it -- as I mentioned before, there are -- there could be additional rounds if the \$20 million aren't spent this time around, but there is certainly other considerations for exactly how to pay for further development in the state and this is something that's been on -- on -- in -- in the conversation, so -- but at this point, this is the -- the current iteration of -- with this program. There won't be a -- a pivot in that regard for -- for this program.

Any other questions? (Inaudible.)

FEMALE SPEAKER: I just wanted to take a second to partially address Joe's comment, though, is that we have -- obviously, I mean, he's not wrong in that some of these systems have gone off line since the buyback rates have fallen to levels that don't sustain them economically that way.

However, we are also seeing a number of
systems staying on line that are less -- are doing so
less for the energy production and more so for the
manure management optimization aspects. So while I
admit there is some downside to the energy production
and costs associated with that, not in necessarily my
realm of expertise, but I know that there is a lot of
benefit that the farms see.

2.2

And when we were talking to the farmers about this project, they could care less about the energy. I -- you know, I know a lot of you care a lot about that, but their aspects are really the manure management and farm management and how it fits in

their system and they see this.

And the ones that have kept their digesters on line are -- see those benefits financially, neighbor relations, environmental issues, all those kind of things combined, and I think we are starting -- starting to see more of the benefits, monetary benefits, associated with those aspects being calculated and -- and held in high regard by the farms that are keepings those systems in tact.

MALE SPEAKER: Thanks, Sarah.

Any other questions about kind of the -- the water treatment and recovery aspect?

1 Yeah, Russ has got a couple here.

2 MALE SPEAKER: Okay.

Have a question about -- "A discussion is revolving around water nitrate reduction. What may be the nitrogen reduction [inaudible] or objective at the farm level or county level, in terms of [inaudible] percentage or total nitrogen reduction countywide?"

The short answer is we don't have these targets at this point. I would say my answer would be that the goal at any nutrient management plan is to apply any nutrient, including nitrogen, according to crop needs. And so, any excess that's put on tends to get put into the environment, whether it's into the groundwater, into the surface water.

So, the -- and these targets that you would come up with are highly variable, according to the soil type, according to the crop that is being -- the crop rotation that's being practiced, according to, you know, the -- the situation of nitrogen that's being on a particular field. So, to establish these types of targets would be extremely difficult and -- at least at the -- at the level that you're talking about.

Maybe at the field level, we could do that, but you do that through your nutrient management plan.

And -- and the whole goal is to try to keep, you know, the 4 R's that Sarah was talking about. You want the right source, the right timing, is probably very important regarding nitrogen as well as the right rate, so those are things that are addressed in -- in the nutrient management plan.

So, yes, nitrogen is an issue. It's an issue for -- we have groundwater standards. We could go -- actually I could talk on this topic all afternoon, but I won't do that to you.

But -- the -- but that's the kind of the short answer is that any targets, they're really established by the nutrient management plan, by the -- by the crop rotation, by the goals of the farm, as far as what their productivity goals are, and, you know, the whole key is to try to have the nitrogen in the roots (inaudible) when the plants take -- up taking the nitrogen, so it's in the right form at that time and that is a -- you know, that's a trick in some cases.

So, I'm sorry I don't have a better answer for that, but that's -- that's sort of the status where we're at.

MALE SPEAKER: Okay. Any other questions on the water treatment and recovery side of things?

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1
                    MALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)
 2
                    MALE SPEAKER:
                                   Sure.
 3
                    MALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)
 4
                    MALE SPEAKER: Hang on -- hang on one
 5
          second.
 6
                    (Multiple speakers inaudible.)
 7
                    MALE SPEAKER: I can yell.
 8
                    MALE SPEAKER: We're recording, so we gotta
 9
10
                    MALE SPEAKER: Cool.
11
                    FEMALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)
12
                    MALE SPEAKER:
                                   All right.
13
                    So we're here because the State wants to put
14
          together a system, somewhere in the state, that is
15
         going to control nutrients. It's gonna have -- it's
16
         gonna be a nutrient management program, right? I
17
          think I heard that said many times. It's written
18
          down. Yet you're telling us that we don't have a
19
          standard to meet? I mean, how do you judge what
20
          system is good and which (inaudible)?
21
                    MALE SPEAKER: The standard to meet -- okay,
2.2
          look at UW -- it's a -- a recommendation.
23
         regarding how much --
24
                    MALE SPEAKER: No, no, no.
25
                    (Multiple speakers inaudible.)
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1 MALE SPEAKER: The point is this plant or 2 plants or whatever they're gonna be, we have to design 3 it to meet some standard, but you're telling us there 4 is no standard, that the standard is in the field. What -- what do we design it for? 5 6 MALE SPEAKER: Well, if you're talking about 7 as far as the effluent --8 MALE SPEAKER: Yeah. MALE SPEAKER: Okay. If you're talking 9 10 about the effluent, then, yes, there would be a 11 standard and that's dependent on what you're gonna do 12 with that effluent. 13 Are you gonna give it to the cows? 14 one standard. Are you gonna put it in a -- in a 15 That's another standard and it varies by the 16 stream because different streams have different 17 simulative capacities. So we do a -- a very detailed 18 calculation regarding how much, what's your -- what's 19 your treatment, what your volume is, what -- what 20 you're proposing to do with that, and we give you an

But I can't stand up here and say here's the -- here's the effluent limit for a county. It is case specific according to exactly what you're proposing.

MALE SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you.

effluent limit, yes. We can do that.

21

2.2

23

1	MALE SPEAKER: Thanks.
2	FEMALE SPEAKER: I have a question for you.
3	MALE SPEAKER: Another question back in the
4	(inaudible) there we go.
5	MALE SPEAKER: As long as we're we have
6	the DNR representative, is it permissible at this
7	point to put pure H2O into a into a creek or land
8	discharge it, that may, you know, have its way to a
9	creek, or do we have to re-pollute it before we
10	discharge it?
11	MALE SPEAKER: If you can get distilled
12	water
13	MALE SPEAKER: Oh, even better. We're
14	talking RO water.
15	MALE SPEAKER: I mean, that
16	MALE SPEAKER: Is it permissible to dump RO
17	water into a habitat, you know, into a waterway?
18	MALE SPEAKER: I think that depends on the
19	waterway. It really does.
20	I mean, that's certainly not our goal, but
21	it depends on if if if you're going to, for
22	example, discharge a great deal of distilled water
23	into a an intermittent stream that's going to
24	create kind of a sterile area in that stream, I don't
25	think that we would be too keen on that. If you're

1 going to discharge a small amount into a river that 2 has a great deal of (inaudible), you can effect the 3 environment, we wouldn't have any problem with that. 4 So, a lot of these -- the answers are it depends on exactly how much, where, how -- how you 5 6 intend to do it. 7 MALE SPEAKER: Okay. How about in the avail 8 -- let's just say a waterway, 20,000 gallons a day 9 into a waterway, which would change the vegetation of 10 the waterway to a slightly more wet footed vegetation, 11 but it would re-mineralize by the time it got to a --12 any type of river or creek, would that be acceptable? 13 Do you feel --14 MALE SPEAKER: It could be. 15 MALE SPEAKER: -- that that's permitable? 16 MALE SPEAKER: It could be. I mean, I'm not 17 gonna stand here and say, yes, absolutely, and bless 18 it right now. 19 (Multiple speakers inaudible.) 20 MALE SPEAKER: Is there any --21 MALE SPEAKER: Is there a prohibition that I 22 -- you know, that I would say that we would right now 23 say there's no law against it, no, a regulation 24 against it, but, it would be kind of a first. 25 Ah, Tim is here. He can talk about that.

1 MALE SPEAKER: I'm not sure if you're 2 getting to like ion deficiency toxicity. Is that --3 MALE SPEAKER: Right. 4 MALE SPEAKER: -- the concern you're talking about? When we have -- when we have lead testing, the 5 6 whole effluent toxicity testing, we have kind of a 7 basically a waiver for ion deficiency toxicity 'cause 8 it usually does -- it only exists typically in the lab 9 test as opposed to in the environment. Typically, 10 when those -- those -- like the RO waters discharge, 11 it quickly picks up the ions to where it's not -- no 12 longer toxic to aquatic life. 13 MALE SPEAKER: That's correct. And that's 14 why by op -- applying it to a 1,000 foot long 15 waterway, you know, it's re-mineralized and normalized 16 or re-polluted by the time it --17 MALE SPEAKER: Yeah. 18 MALE SPEAKER: -- could get to any stream. 19 MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, correct. I -- we -- we 20 don't see that as a wet failure when we -- when we 21 evaluate that testing, which is typically included in 22 permits. 'Cause --23 MALE SPEAKER: So the --24 MALE SPEAKER: -- we -- we see that in -- in 25 some of the dairy industry when they have like cow

1	water, (inaudible) away, they usually treat that with
2	RO and they can tend to have some of those same issues
3	where they'd have ion deficiency toxicity.
4	MALE SPEAKER: So you see no difficulties in
5	permitting RO permeate and discharge?
6	MALE SPEAKER: Yes, correct. We could
7	permit that.
8	MALE SPEAKER: Thank you.
9	MALE SPEAKER: Thanks, Tim. That's why we
10	got him here.
11	(Multiple speakers inaudible.)
12	MALE SPEAKER: Hang on one second.
13	MALE SPEAKER: Okay.
14	MALE SPEAKER: Got somebody in the back.
15	MALE SPEAKER: Okay.
16	MALE SPEAKER: There's somebody in the back.
17	MALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)
18	MALE SPEAKER: Okay.
19	MALE SPEAKER: When do this water, or when
20	the manure is still being manure to come manure
21	(inaudible) the fibers and you have the water, is that
22	is water or is going to waste to manure?
23	MALE SPEAKER: I don't know whether we
24	define it that in that way. I think if you've
25	treated it and you have a ability to you know,

permit to discharge it and you can meet those effluent limits, it doesn't matter what you call it. The -- the sludge, if you will, that's coming off, would still be treated as manure, but the -- the effluent would be treated as any other effluent would be.

MALE SPEAKER: Okay.

MALE SPEAKER: Okay. Last call for water-related questions. Okay.

So I think now we're gonna move onto project economics and I have a few questions up here that would go along those lines. I'm gonna probably pull in a couple others that are in the audience to -- to help me answer those questions. But does anyone have anything about project economics they'd like to start us out with? I've got a couple I can start with.

So, one of them has to do with -- the question is for vendors. "Are they reimbursed at the sales price?"

So, it's a little unclear to me exactly what we're after, but that would depend on the -- the contract between the consortium, how the -- the organization is -- is dealing with -- with revenues and expenses for -- for the project. Again, the -- the focus money is a reim -- reimbursement that comes in a -- at a lump sum after installation and

verification by -- by Focus on Energy.

So, how the vendors are -- are

So, how the vendors are -- are -- are paid and compensated is -- is entirely within the -- the consortium's agreements.

I don't know if anyone in the back there at Focus has any comment on paying -- paying the vendors and -- and how that goes? No? Okay.

(Multiple speakers inaudible.)

MALE SPEAKER: There's one here about public money and public data.

So just to clarify where this -- where this money is coming from, this is \$20 million from Focus on Energy -- the Focus on Energy program, which is the -- the statewide energy efficiency renewable resource program. So it's -- it's different than tax dollars, right?

But there -- there is a -- a -- a perfectly legitimate question about when -- when those funds come -- coming from rate payers, that go to projects, do we have some ability to -- to see how those funds are -- are used and to get an idea of -- of the success of projects or lessons that we can learn from them.

It's -- I -- I guess maybe I'll toss that back to -- to Catherine and -- and Eric back there, if

you have a comment on kind of if information could come from the projects and how they've been -- how -- the success or failure of projects and -- and kind of what lessons we can learn from them.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Sure. It definitely depends. It's a case-by-case basis. We do have customer confidentiality rules in Focus on Energy, so if you're participating and you complete a project, unless you are asked or, you know, maybe you want to provide a success story or information about your project, we do have to get that information confirmed by the applicant and the customer.

So, it's possible that that information could be provided, but you do have to do it upon request. So, it's not just put out on the website without a customer's permission or participant's permission in the programs.

MALE SPEAKER: Thanks. And that kinda gets to also there's been some questions about trade secrets or intellectual property that's involved with proposals that come forward.

And, you know, the -- the way that the state would operate would be to say that it is protected, there will be -- information will not be shared from - from applicants that don't want certain information

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shared, trade secrets, what have you, and -- and that's been the case with the Focus program for years now, so that -- that's not to be -- that's not a challenge.

So one question is, "What guarantee does the consortium have to get payment [when --] once installation and operation has taken place?"

So again, that goes back to the date of award and kind of the final decision from the Commission and from Focus Energy of -- of winning proposals. At that time, there will be a contract put in place to say, you know, for this amount of time for the project construction and there will be a schedule for the verification from Focus.

At that time, payment would -- would go out. It would be in the contract. It wouldn't be -- it wouldn't be a wishy-washy agreement about whether or not a project were to get paid, how will the payment be made and to whom. It would be to the applicant and -- and that applicant would likely be -- again, like we're talking to the consortium -- and it would be a reimbursement for the cost of construction and installation.

Are there any other questions on -- on project economics before I continue to move on?

Okay. So I think -- Sarah, it's up to you if you'd like to tackle nutrient management. We can move into energy.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Sure. I can -- if there's any questions -- actually, I have one thing I can share.

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Over the networking lunch period, I had a number of folks come up and talk to me about partic -- how to find participants, how to get in touch with farmers, how to, you know, make those connections that your companies may or may not be used to having to reach out to.

And so, while the notion is (inaudible) long-lived that DATCP has a set of farmer lists that we can just provide out, that's absolutely not the case.

However, most of the ag producers in our state are involved in some level of -- or ag organization. So everything from your dairy business associations, to the potato and vegetable growers, to cattleman's, park producers, you name it. There are a number of ag organizations out there, as well as other smaller groups that work with farmers, corn growers, every day.

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And I would definitely recommend that you reach out to those organizations if you would like to have some help from them to get in touch with farmers, that they may have already been talking to, that have expressed interest and have gone to their organizations to get more information.

(Inaudible) ourselves and PSC and DNR -- has gone to visit with a number of those organizations already to talk about this project and our goals, so that's one opportunity.

The other -- and I mentioned this earlier, but I want to stress it again -- while I don't intend to inundate the county land conservation departments entirely with 500 calls, they are a great resource and one that you should absolutely tap into.

They work with the farmers in their counties everyday. They know which ones have issues that they would like to, you know, maybe be more proactive to deal with, ones that are more willing than others to have discussions, ones that are maybe the leaders in the community that would be more in a better position to bring in their friends and neighbors to talk about this opportunity.

So there are a number of ways that you can get in touch with those folks. Those couple of

directions I think I want to make sure that you try to capitalize on.

The other thing I talked about, a number of people, I think what we'll try to do after this, is when a lot of us registered, or fully didn't like myself as I mentioned, we -- you know, you may or may not have taken the opportunity to put in your contact information fully.

What is in your binder, your packets I guess, is the registration list that we received a few days before -- before today, so it was printed out.

Not a complete list, as you're finding though and some of you may not have taken the opportunity to put in a comment about who you are or who your company is and what your potential role could be in a project.

So I think what we're gonna try to do is double back to the list of registrants, since everybody I think provided an email address at least, to give you the opportunity to either opt out, to not have your information shared, or to be able to augment the information you initially provided so that we can put that up on the PSC -- the (inaudible) webpage.

So those of you who may not have had a chance to shake hands with the right people today and get in touch, we'll have another opportunity to kind

Audio File VN520368, Excerpted Minutes: 00:03:12 to 00:59:24 1 of pick through the list and see what other members of 2 a consortia you're looking for and be able to contact 3 the right people who are obviously at least interested enough to come here today. So you can look for that 4 in the coming days hopefully too. 5 6 With that, if you have any other questions, 7 I know the nutrient management aspect is probably

farthest from your minds at this point, but I hope what I provided today gives you some footing to get started and, you know, I'm -- I'm accessible from now with questions. You can also file those through Clint at the PSC so we share the answers widely and any questions we get in, we'll do that so that the full gamut of potential applicants gets the same information. But I'm happy to take anything else you have right now.

Just a quick comment, please, MALE SPEAKER: again, send in your comment information if you'd like it posted on the website to oei@wisconsin.gov.

So any -- any questions for -- for Sarah and the nutrient management aspect of potential projects? Might get out of here a little early.

Alrighty. Well, then the last -- the last section will be in kind of the biogas energy and I'll try to -- to answer those as much as I can.

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So, I'd like to actually pull in Eric and Catherine again if I can about the aspect we were talking about this morning with injection to interstate pipelines versus distribution by pipelines in the state and how that would be applicable through Focus. Do you guys have some thoughts?

FEMALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MALE SPEAKER: Yes. This is kind of corollary to the question was answered -- asked earlier. It's -- the -- the Focus rules are -- are very clear about this and I think if you -- if you refer to the RFP, I mean, as Clint has reiterated several times, they -- the key eligibility criteria is that the technologies must offset energy demand, either electricity or -- or therms, that would otherwise be provided by a participating utility.

That -- that's a very key parameter for us. So (inaudible), the RNG was injected into an interstate pipeline, all of which left the State of Wisconsin, and every bit of the biogas produced was handled in that manner. None of the digester effort would fall under the Focus rules and would not be eligible. It -- it -- it must be offsetting or generating energy that, you know, is within the service area of one of our participating utilities.

That's a very strict rule. So --

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MALE SPEAKER: Thanks, Eric. The other question is in regards to kind of what was mentioned before, kind of more direct payment to -- to producers of biogas energy.

"Could or would utilities bring consumers willing to pay a premium of a [-- of a] above avoided cost for green energy?"

One of the examples we see is from Vermont in the Cow Power program. That's not something that we have in Wisconsin. So I guess I can't really say if that's a viable option in the short term, but certainly something to -- to continue the -- the conversation and -- and how do we kind of bring more value to -- to renewable energy generation.

So, at this point, there's not a program -- a program in this state that allows that, but certainly a conversation for -- for local officials, elected officials, and for utilities.

To me, the interesting one that might -might rope in Eric and Catherine in the back again is,
"How will [the -- how will] incorporating non-biogas
renewables or energy efficiency, like solar panels or
insulation and whatnot, be evaluated in the
proposals?"

So there's a -- a section in the -- when it talks about the eligible systems, right under that, it's talking about, you know, contact your Focus adviser about other energy efficiency, renewable energy systems, so this is kind of that -- that conjoining of -- conjoining of multiple programs at Focus.

So there's -- there's one program, it's RECIP, and then there's another program that's this -- this \$20 million. Those are two separate pots of money. But there is a -- a sense that certain of the systems that are offered in other programs, outside of this biogas program, could be eligible for -- for funding.

So, I guess I'll ask that to -- to Eric and Catherine. Is there a -- a sense that -- that other renewables and energy efficiency could be put into a program -- into a project?

(Multiple speakers inaudible.)

FEMALE SPEAKER: Okay. Well, just to clarify, if you're gonna apply for Renewable Energy Competitive Incentive Program, that's a separate process from this anaerobic digester offering, so we actually have an RFP out for that program right now and I technically can't answer questions about it at

this time, so if you have questions about that, I would definitely redirect -- or turn those over to recip@focusonenergy.com, so I'm just gonna kind of sidestep that one.

Eric, did you want to address any of the other components on that?

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, just one. Focus on

Energy does offer quite a range of what we call

standard incentives -- we call 'em prescriptive

incentives. They're for just regular energy

efficiency improvements, where you might have an

option from going -- for the more conventional type of

equipment or technology to that next step up of more

energy efficient and -- and Focus offers lots of

incentives.

An example might be going to LED lighting as opposed to fluorescent, incandescent, so, you know, those are available, but I -- I would refer you to the RFP on Page 2, there's in Table 1, it kind of breaks down by system el -- by eligibility among the administrative organizers here.

The Public Service Commission and Focus are listed first and you see in that list things like the biogas production, uh, biogas compression, the piping systems, electricity production, you know, you'd put

in generator if you might use that, generating renewable natural gas, or CNG (inaudible) for transportation fuel, that is, you know, currently supplied as natural gas by a participating utility.

Again, that -- there's that link.

And then it's just energy efficiency and other renewables. You notice there's other technologies broken out by -- under the DNR's heading and DATCP's heading, so specifically the Focus on Energy, those -- those components of the -- this overall project listed in this table are the ones that, you know, we -- all of the incentive programs is gonna get is encompassed within that lump sum.

If you're selected and you're awarded, that

-- every -- every bit of energy efficiency in your

project would be rewarded, so to speak, you know, via

that incentive from Focus.

Now, if you put up say a building on the property to house some of these other treatment systems, like the water -- or the digested solids treatment, water treatment equipment, and you want to make upgrades to that building, simply, you know, the lighting system, the heating/ventilating system, things like that, Focus incentives would be eligible for those components.

1 So, again, if you -- if you have specific 2 questions, I'd encourage you to submit them to that 3 email address that Clint mentioned and we'll get you very specific answers -- well, everyone would be, 4 5 well, able to access those specific answers, so please 6 don't hesitate to ask specific questions if you have 7 them. 8 That's oei@wisconsin.gov. MALE SPEAKER: 9 Was there a comment also to that question 10 Is that what I heard? No? Okay. from Renew? MALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.) Just building 11 12 on what Catherine said, there is a separate RFP for 13 the RECIP renewable projects and that's due right now, 14 March 24th, of this year. And is there an expectation 15 that there will be another round of that? 16 there is an expectation that there will be another 17 round of that, so thinking about projects, if you're 18 thinking of that, the timelines don't all line up 19 perfectly. 20 Thanks, Tyler. Okay. MALE SPEAKER: 21 So there's another question here about --"What percentage of energy reduction off-farm could be 2.2 23 sold to grid or pipeline?" 24 Off-farm -- I mean, there's no -- there's no 25 limit to -- or there's no prescription of how much of

the energy produced needs to go on to the grid. And - and as you're -- as you can tell, there's a little
bit of contention about, you know, which pipeline
we're -- we're injecting into. Obviously, Focus has
purview over the -- the Wisconsin utility distribution
system, not the (inaudible) -- interstate pipelines,
so that makes a big difference.

And then the second part is, "Must energy be used only on farms to reduce kilowatt hours or [-- or -- or] therm use?"

No, that kinda goes back to that other question, that other statement at the end here about kind of the -- I can't find the slide -- it's the one that talks about the -- the -- all of the energy being used or -- or the -- the energy produced exceeding the amount annually used. That's -- that is -- it's the case that you can completely offset a facility and -- and it's -- that's still Focus eligible.

I don't know if -- yeah, go ahead.

(Multiple speakers inaudible.)

MALE SPEAKER: I had a follow-up question on the whole interstate pipeline issue.

So, if you inject RNG into the interstate pipeline and let's just say We Energies is already purchasing, they have a gatehouse and they're getting

their natural gas from that interstate pipeline too,
isn't there a displacement factor that would say
you've already -- you're reducing that demand with the
renewable natural gas, even if you're not directly
injecting it into the We Energies pipeline?

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, I think there might be a way to -- to make that case. And perhaps that would take some interaction with the utility to kind of -- to formalize that arrangement.

Maybe -- maybe even Jeff -- I don't know if you have a thought on that -- on --

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah. I think that's a possibility, but Clint's right, you -- we want you to work with the utility to formalize that arrangement so the utility's recognizing that they're actually purchasing that renewable gas as an offset to the natural gas they'd be getting delivered at the gate station.

MALE SPEAKER: Thanks, Jeff.

Just kinda looking over -- pretty much answered most of the questions that we've gotten. And again, any -- any that have been written that we didn't get to or didn't get to completely, we will have posted on the website on -- on the PSC's webpage. Are there any other questions about the energy aspect

of projects?

Got one over here.

MALE SPEAKER: Hi. I -- this is back to that question about the -- the award of the grant.

I realize that if you award the grant and if you can get other grants from other sources, it's beneficial, but I've worked on projects where we get a grant and then we -- like, we would get your grant and then we would get a USDA grant six months later. And in New York what they do is they deduct a certain portion of that USDA grant amount from their grant. Would you be doing the same?

MALE SPEAKER: No. We wouldn't -- we wouldn't be changing the -- the incentive amount based on other -- other funding sources. But -- but again, just to reiterate the point that the -- the inclusion of other funding sources into the -- the application is -- is going to be beneficial.

Any other questions?

Yeah, there's a couple more.

MALE SPEAKER: I -- I have a question concerning the R -- RNG and there's some discussion, you know, selling it to We Energies. Obviously, the only financial incentive here with that RNG is to really put it in an interstate pipeline and currently

1 there's some federal subsidies or N Credits. 2 California, there's some additional credits. There 3 isn't any incentive in Wisconsin for any of that. 4 If we're putting RNG into the pipeline but we're also using some of it on our own to reduce the 5 6 requirement of a facility, I guess we'd have, what, 7 some partial credit for what we're reducing at the facility and we could sell the other stuff on our own? 8 9 (Multiple speakers inaudible.) 10 MALE SPEAKER: So you're saying -- you're 11 saying kind of where -- kind of where the -- where the 12 offsetting is -- is occurring --13 MALE SPEAKER: Right. 14 MALE SPEAKER: -- does that modify how the -- the eligibility for these funds? 15 16 Again, it goes back to is -- is any of that 17 reducing the demand on -- on participating utilities. 18 That's -- that's the bottom line. So, if it's -- if 19 it's part electricity generation and part injection to 20 a pipeline that's -- that's Focus eligible, then 21 that's perfectly acceptable. 2.2 Is there another one on the right side of 23 the room here? 24 (Multiple speakers inaudible.) 25 MALE SPEAKER: I was seeing if Megan can

answer my question for me.

So on Page 1, it says, "A successful proposal will involve," -- it lists a number of things -- the final one is, "And transport of manure to and from a centralized location." So are you envisioning that that -- are you requiring it be that it is manure that's transported or is there a possibility that there's distributed digesters that are moving close to digested materials to and from centralized locations?

Sure. So the -- some of that language is -- is kind of early on in our process and we wanted to include it just to kind of give an idea of what the conversation had been. The -- we -- we don't want to suggest that there's a certain way that the feedstocks should be treated in the system.

Just talking to a few folks over lunch,
there could be, you know -- there could be a
consortium of eight small digesters and they're all -they all ship the gas by pipe to a centralized
location. Or there could be one digester where
everyone brings the manure to a central location. We
don't want to say that one way is better than the
other. We want to have applicants propose something
that's the most economically feasible for their -their conditions.

1 So -- and I think that's reflected in -- in 2 the scoring criteria when -- when it talks about 3 system design and optimization. There's some -- some 4 quides at the end of the RFP after the -- the scoring 5 criteria in Section 5 that goes into a little bit more 6 of -- of what we -- what we see as what we'd like the 7 outcome to be from the reduction in the cost of -- of 8 hauling manure and a lot of that has to do with, you 9 know, liquid solid separation and -- and whatnot.

But the -- we don't necessarily want to say how that's done. We want to say that we'd like to see it done, but not how.

SPEAKER: One more question.

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah.

MALE SPEAKER: Bit of a question and then a comment and there was comment on the federal credits regarding the renewable fuel standard and where they are available.

They are available anywhere across the

United States, including Wisconsin. That fuel just
has to be used as a vehicle fuel and there's a

certification process for that. So it's not just

California. It's not just the Pacific Northwest.

Those are available and it does not have to be put
into a pipeline to get those credits. It can be used

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1 directly. 2 The problem typically is it's a lot of fuel 3 and there's not a lot of CNG vehicles in Wisconsin, so 4 that's something that's hopefully changing here in the 5 near future to utilize RNG. 6 MALE SPEAKER: Thank you. Is there a -- do 7 you know of a website where we could send out to 8 everyone to have access to that -- that information? 9 MALE SPEAKER: I'll try and get something --10 MALE SPEAKER: Great. 11 MALE SPEAKER: -- on the federal fuel 12 standard. MALE SPEAKER: Okay. Great. Any other 13 14 questions? Might be able to wrap up a whole hour 15 early and I think we'll do just that. 16 (End of excerpt.) 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

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